

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /069 W

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R 151920Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL ST JOHNS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1323

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

95TH STRAT WG, GOOSE BAY APRT UNN

UNCLAS ST JOHNS 0016

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS MARR CA

SUBJECT SOUR NOTE ON GOOSE BAY WITHDRAWAL

REF 75 STJOHNS 296

1. ALTHOUGH USAF WITHDRAWAL AT GOOSE BAY IS BEING TREATED UNDERSTANDINGLY FOR MOST PART IN MEDIA, IT IS PERHAPS INEVITABLE THAT SOME PRESS COMMENT WILL BE LESS THAN COMPLIMENTARY. CASE IN POINT IS EDITORIAL IN "LABRADOR REPORT", WEEKLY SECTION ON LABRADOR APPEARING IN ST.JOHN'S DAILY NEWS OF 1/15/76. PARA 2 BELOW IS TEXT OF EDITORIAL WHICH APPEARED UNDER HEADLINE "GOOD DEAL COULD BE MADE".

2. "SO NOW WE HAVE IT. THE AMERICANS WANT TO MAKE IT ANOTHER HALF-ASSED PULLOUT, LEAVING JUST ENOUGH PEOPLE AND KEEPING JUST ENOUGH OF A ROPE AROUND THE NECK OF THEIR FORMER BASE AT GOOSE BAY TO MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE ELSE TO DO ANYTHING WITH IT.

"IT'S THE SELF-SAME THING THEY DID AT ARGENTIA. AND, WE GET NO SATISFACTION WHATEVER OUT OF BEING ABLE TO SAY, "I TOLD YOU SO."

"IT IS WRONG, WRONG, WRONG. BUT LET US REMEMBER THE AMERICANS CAN'T DO IT ALONE. THEY CAN ONLY RENEW THEIR LEASE WITH THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT IF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT
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AGREES TO IT. THEY MUST ALSO AGREE TO THE TERMS. THEN, WHY DON'T THEY MAKE THE TERMS IN THE INTEREST OF LABRADORIANS,

WHO ARE NEWFOUNDLANDERS, AND HEAVEN HELP US, CANADIANS?
THAT IS WHAT YOU'D THINK THEY'D DO.

"BUT,NO SIR. IT SEEMS THEY ARE NOT GOING TO DO IT THAT
WAY. AND, NOBODY IS GOING TO TRY TO MAKE THEM. THE
NEWFOUNDLAND GOVERNMENT, APPARENTLY UNABLE TO DEAL WITH
ANY PROBLEM EXCEPT TO LEAVE IT OR BLAME IT ON OTTAWA,
EVIDENTLY ARE TAKING NO INTEREST.

"LABRADOR REPORT IS CONVINCED THAT A HARD BARGAIN AND
A GOOD DEAL CAN BE DRIVEN WITH THE AMERICANS WHO ARE HAVING
PLENTY OF WORRIES THESE DAYS IN KEFLAVIK, AND MIGHT BE VERY
GLAD TO KEEP GOOSE AS A FALLBACK BASE, WITH A RESPECTABLE LEVEL
OF TROOPS AND ACTIVITY. IF THEY ARE NOT PREPARED TO HAVE A
SUBSTANTIAL OPERATION HERE, FOR A LONG TERM, THEN LET'S
TELL THEM TO GET OUT ALTOGETHER."

3. COMMENT: STYLE OF WRITING AND DEGREE OF DISGRUNTLEMENT
MAKE IT APPARENT THAT AUTHOR OF ABOVE IS SAME PERSON WHO
AUTHORED PREVIOUS EDITORIAL ON GOOSE WHICH WAS QUOTED IN
REFTEL. THIS PEPPERY PUNDIT OF
LABRADOR HAS NO TIME TO SPARE FOR MERE
CONSIDERATIONS OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY OR CONTINENTAL
DEFENSE. WITH HIM THE ONLY ISSUE IS JOBS. LUCKILY
THERE ARE NEWFOUNDLANDERS WITH BROADER VISION THAN HIS.
MOORE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, INFORMATION MEDIA, MILITARY BASES, GOOSE BAY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STJOH00016
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760016-0304
From: ST JOHNS, NEWFOUNDLAND
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760153/aaaabvil.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUL 2004 by castelsl>; APPROVED <08 NOV 2004 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUR NOTE ON GOOSE BAY WITHDRAWAL
TAGS: MARR, CA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006